

COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS POLICY

Subject

Use and Distribution of County-Owned Sandbags and Other Resources

**Policy
Number**

K-11

Page

1 of 2

Purpose

To establish policies and procedures for the use and distribution of County-owned sandbags before and during emergency operations.

Background

During the past winter seasons, citizens in the flood prone areas of the County, because of high demand, were unable to purchase sandbags for flood protection. Subsequently various groups of citizens have requested that the County furnish them with sandbags prior to the start of the storm season so that they can be ready to protect their homes. Giving out sandbags to citizens to protect private property would be a gift of public funds and is therefore prohibited by the California Constitution except in cases where a public interest in such sandbag distribution can be identified. It is primarily the responsibility of the individual homeowners to protect their home from flood damage. The County Office of Disaster Preparedness shall assist homeowners in preparing for the flood season by making available information on sources of equipment and supplies and by a continuing program of education in the techniques of flood damage prevention.

Policy

It is the policy of the Board of Supervisors that:

1. Primary responsibility for the prevention of flood damage to private property rests with the individual property owner.
2. Information on the techniques of flood damage prevention shall be made available by the County office of Disaster Preparedness.
3. The County Office of Disaster Preparedness shall maintain an up-to-date listing of commercial sources for sand, sandbags, pumps and electric generators available to the public upon request.
4. County forces and resources before and during emergency operations due to flooding shall be restricted to:
 - a. protection of public highways, bridges, culverts, buildings and other public facilities,
 - b. prevention or alleviation of widespread inundation areas, including the distribution of sandbags to private property owners in areas where there exists substantial public

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Page

2 of 2

interest because of the potential for widespread flooding and significant harm to the public health, safety and welfare if preventative action is not taken. It is the finding of the Board of Supervisors that there is a public interest served in the distribution of sandbags to private property owners where:

1. private citizens are participating in the National Flood Insurance Program, and
2. in areas meeting the Small Business Administration disaster loan criteria where 25 homes or businesses have been damaged due to heavy rains and/or flooding disaster.
3. in Community Redevelopment areas where CDBG funding has enabled the purchase of sandbags for this express purpose.

c. emergency repairs of drainage facilities to prevent damages for which the County could be held liable.

Sunset Date

This policy will be reviewed for continuance by 12-31-96.

Board Action

12-10-80 (7c)

1-13-81 (71)

12-4-84 (29)

12-15-87 (44)

11-29-94 (40)

CAO Reference